

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SANTIA 06925 122350Z
ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 479

S E C R E T SANTIAGO 6925

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FOR ARA, D, P AND L ONLY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: CI, PGOV, SHUM
SUBJ: LETELIER/MOFFITT ASSASSINATION: EXTRADITION REQUESTS

REF: SANTIAGO 6581

1. EXTRADITION REQUESTS BROUGHT BY SPECIAL COURIER ARRIVED AT EMBASSY 1615 HOURS SEPTEMBER 12. IN THE NEXT DAY OR TWO USG LAWYER ETCHEBERRY WILL GO OVER THE PACKAGE TO MAKE SURE THAT EVERYTHING IS IN ORDER. HE WILL COME TO THE EMBASSY FOR THAT PURPOSE.

2. ETCHEBERRY BELIEVES STRONGLY THAT THE EXTRADITION REQUESTS SHOULD BE DELIVERED TO THE FOREIGN MINISTRY ON WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20. BY THAT TIME SUPREME COURT PRESIDENT ISRAEL BORQUEZ WILL BE BACK ON THE JOB AFTER A MONTH'S MEDICAL ABSENCE. THE VIEW OF ETCHEBERRY, WITH WHICH I CONCUR, IS THAT IT IS HIGHLY DESIRABLE TO HAVE ONE JUSTICE HANDLE THE EXTRADITION REQUESTS FROM BEGINNING TO END OF THE PROCEDURE. IT IS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT THAT THE JUSTICE WHO HEARS THE INITIAL DECLARATIONS OF THE THREE DEFENDANTS

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(DURING OR FOLLOWING WHICH HE CAN ASK THEM QUESTIONS) BE THE SAME JUSTICE WHO MAKES THE FINAL DECISION. WERE WE TO DELIVER THE EXTRADITION REQUESTS TO THE FOREIGN MINISTRY ON SEPTEMBER 15 OR EARLIER, ACTING SUPREME COURT PRESIDENT EYZAGUIRRE WOULD TAKE THE INITIAL ACTIONS. SEPTEMBER 16 AND 17, OF COURSE, IS THE WEEKEND AND SEPTEMBER 18 AND 19 ARE NATIONAL HOLIDAYS, BUT EYZAGUIRRE REPORTEDLY IS PREPARED

TO WORK DURING THESE DAYS.

3. TO DELIVER DOCUMENTS ON THE LAST WORKING DAY BEFORE THE NATIONAL HOLIDAY MIGHT INFLUENCE PUBLIC OPINION NEGATIVELY. IT IS ALL AROUND BETTER TO DELIVER THEM ON THE 20TH AS ETCHEBERRY HAS ALREADY FORECAST PUBLICLY ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

4. PRESS HERE HAS BEEN CLAIMING FOR DAYS THAT EXTRADITION DOCUMENTS WERE ALREADY IN SANTIAGO. IN AN ATTEMPT TO AVOID CONSTANT SPECULATION, WE HAVE INFORMED PRESS THAT EMBASSY WILL NOT MAKE ANY STATEMENT UNTIL DOCUMENTS ARE DELIVERED TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER. IN VIEW OF THE ABOVE, I RECOMMEND STRONGLY THAT NO PRESS RELEASES BE MADE IN WASHINGTON UNTIL WE HAVE DELIVERED DOCUMENTS.
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